
Education Committee

HB 1987

Brief Description: Regarding alternative assessments.

Sponsors: Representatives Priest, Ormsby, Curtis and Anderson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to pilot a career and technical alternative to the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL).
- Permits students in approved career and technical programs that lead to rigorous industry certification to use that certification in lieu of the WASL to meet the state's new graduation requirements.

Hearing Date: 2/21/05

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

By law, beginning with the class of 2008, most public school students will be required to meet state standards in reading, writing, and mathematics in order to graduate. The students may meet this requirement by either passing the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in those content areas or by successful completion of an alternative assessment approved by the Legislature. Before taking an alternative assessment, students must take the WASL twice.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature intends to honor the original vision of education reform by giving students an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through rigorous career and technical assessment alternatives that lead to industry certification.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) will design a career and technical alternative to the WASL. The alternative will be available to students enrolled in career and technical programs that are aligned to the state standards in reading, writing, mathematics, and science and have been approved by the SPI. The alternatives must include written, widely accepted state or national industry certification that is based on an objective assessment or evaluation.

The SPI will pilot the certification alternatives from the 2006-07 to the 2011-12 school years. During that time, the agency will provide biennial progress reports to the legislature and, before

the pilots end, will evaluate their effectiveness. Students in the pilots will take the WASL and may be required to take community college placement examinations as well. By October 2012, the SPI will report on the pilots and will recommend whether to continue permitting students to use industry certification as an alternative to the WASL.

Students in the pilots will not be required to take the WASL more than once.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 14, 2005.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.